2 to be a displayable region, and arranges the application region **11***a* and the key display regions **12***a* to **12***g* in this region.

On the other hand, as shown in FIGS. **11**A and **11**B, when the keyboard apparatus **2** is removed from the information processing apparatus body **1** and used with the function keys **21** placed upward, the keyboard position detecting part **51** detects this state based on the determination results of the keyboard upside/downside determining part **94**, as described in Embodiment 2, and enables the function keys **21**. In this state, the keyboard apparatus **2** has been removed from the information processing apparatus body **1**, so that the entire opening range A of the display region **11** in the vertical direction is used as a displayable region. Thus, the display control part **53** arranges the key display regions **12***a* to **12***g* on a lower side compared with FIG. **10**A. A larger region in the display region **11** can also be assigned as the application region **11***a*.

The size of such a displayable region can be switched by changing the resolution of a screen with a graphic driver in the information processing apparatus.

Thus, in the information processing apparatus of the present embodiment, in the case where the function keys **21** are effective, whether or not the keyboard apparatus **2** covers a part of the display region **11** is detected by the keyboard position detecting part **51**, and the arrangement of the key display regions **12***a* to **12***g* in the display region is changed in accordance with the detection results. Consequently, the displayable range of the display region **11** can be used effectively.

The above-mentioned Embodiments 1 to 3 are not intended to limit the present invention, and they can be varied in the scope of the present invention. For example, the number and shape of the function keys to be provided on the bottom surface of the keyboard apparatus may be different from those in the drawings referred to in each of the embodiments. Furthermore, the mechanism of detecting the position and direction of the keyboard apparatus is not limited to that disclosed in the present embodiment. A mechanical sensor, an optical sensor, or the like can be appropriately used.

Furthermore, in the above-mentioned respective embodiments, the information processing apparatus with a keyboard apparatus that is foldable so as to cover a lower part of the display region has been illustrated. However, the information processing apparatus with a double-sided operable keyboard apparatus, which is foldable so as to cover a left end of the display region, a right end of the display region, or an upper part of the display region, also belongs to the technical range of the present invention.

The present invention is useful as an information processing apparatus with a double-sided operable keyboard apparatus, which is capable of executing desired application processing by operating function keys, even in the case where a keyboard is folded and the keys to be normally operated are directed to a reverse side (e.g., a display apparatus side or a lower side) with respect to a user.

The invention may be embodied in other forms without departing from the spirit or essential characteristics thereof. The embodiments disclosed in this application are to be considered in all respects as illustrative and not limiting. The scope of the invention is indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description, and all changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are intended to be embraced therein.

What is claimed is:

1. An information processing apparatus comprising:

a display unit that has a display region operable to display information thereon,

a keyboard unit pivotally connected to the display unit, the keyboard unit includes keys on its first surface and a function key on its second surface, and the keyboard unit covers a portion of the display region when the keyboard unit is in a folded position,

a keyboard position detection unit that detects a relative position of the keyboard unit with respect to the display unit,

an input control unit that switches either of the keys on the first surface and the function key on the second surface to be operable in accordance with said relative position of the keyboard unit detected by the keyboard position detection unit, and

a display control unit that controls the display portion to display information concerning function assigned to the function key in a part of the display region that is not covered by the keyboard unit when the keyboard position detection unit detects that the keyboard unit is in said folded position.

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